

*The Advantage of Employing the Poor in
Useful Labour, and Mischief of Idleness,
or Ill-judg'd Business.*

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IN A
S E R M O N

Preached at

St. Mary's in BEVERLEY,

October 10. 1725.

Before the Right Worshipful

EDWARD WILBERT Esq; Mayor;

JOSEPH BIELBY Esq; Mayor Elect;

FRANCIS BOYNTON Esq; Recorder;

The Worshipful Aldermen, and Capital

Burgesses of the said Town.

By **SAM. JOHNSTON, S. T. B.**

Vicar of St. Mary's, and Rector of St. Nicholas,
United Parishes in Beverley.

The Second Edition.

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TO THE
Right Worshipful the Mayor,
the Recorder, the Worshipful
the Aldermen, and Capital
Burghesses of Beverley.

GENTLEMEN,

THE Subject Matter of this Sermon preach'd before you, being intended for a Publick Service in this Town, I am very desirous it should answer the End propos'd; which some of You seem'd to think could not so effectually be done, without the Publication of it. As it is in the Power of Those, who desired the Printing of it, to make the Advice effectual, upon this View I consented, and hope it may excuse the Badness of the Materials, since they may by your Management be made useful to good Purpose.

I am,
Your most Obliged
Humble Servant,

Sam. Johnston.

PREFACE to the SECOND EDITION.

N the Management of the Subject of the ensuing Discourse, I have endeavour'd to pursue the Intention of the Legislature; who, I presume, design'd to remove a general Grievance, occasion'd by the Burden of a numerous and useless Poor, and promote a general Advantage by the Benefit of their present Labour, and the Education of their Children to Industry for the future. And, I hope, 'tis evident, the Conduct here recommended would answer such good Intention, and be of universal Service to the Nation if universally follow'd.

As to the Motives urged; since GOD has directed us to the Expectation of temporal Blessings, and given the Promises of this Life as well as that which is to come, to encourage our Obedience, we may surely be allowed to use those Arguments in the Pulpit, which GOD uses in his Word; and therefore Reasons of doing Good, deriv'd from prudential Considerations, are no way improper, unless they degenerate into mere worldly Wisdom, and have no View but temporal Interest. But when we can promote the Practice of true Religion, and useful Business, at a less Expence than we now support Idleness and Debauchery, it is not, nor ought to be call'd ill Husbandry, nor esteem'd derogatory from the Principles of the Gospel.

THIS I thought necessary, to answer such Objections as have been, or may be made to the Method I have taken. Beside, the Savings from a Tax for the Support of the Poor, may be employed more beneficially to the Souls of the Charitable upon Occasions which they can never want; while at the same Time the Poor will be better maintain'd, tho' at a cheaper Rate.

PROV.



PROV. XIII. 23.

*Much Food is in the Tillage of
the Poor: but there is that
is destroy'd for want of Judg-
ment.*



WHILE the Inhabitants of the World were few, and their Way of Living plain and simple, the Value of Land, and consequently of all other Things, was little. Their Riches consisted for the main part in their Cattle, and they removed from Place to Place for the Conveniency of Pasture, and chose any where a Residence, that was not before occupied by another Proprietor. And while there was every where Room enough for

for all the Inhabitants, their Flocks and Herds, and Mankind were contented with common Necessaries of Life; no one could be poor, or want in those Circumstances; and there was no Occasion for the Exercise of the Wit and Invention of Men, to contrive Ways and Means of getting a Livelihood, by improving the Value of Things by Art and Industry, and the Exchange of useful and convenient Commodities for Food and Raiment.

IN this Period of Time, *Labour*, the Consequence of the Curse, was common to all the Posterity of him, who was doom'd to eat his Bread in the Sweat of his Face. The Heads of Families cultivated their own Vineyards, tilled their Fields, and fed their Cattle, and bore their Share in the general Toil, and Travel of Mankind. But when Men increas'd, and the Earth was divided in Property to particular Persons and Families, *Trades* and *Manufactures* became necessary, and *Labour* the especial Portion of part of Mankind only. The Wants of the Poor, and Luxury of the Rich, obliged the One to take Pains in some Sort of Business, and by Artifice and Workmanship give such a Value to the *Little* they were Masters of, as might, in return, procure what they wanted, and the others had Plenty of; and the Others Abundance enabled them to pay the Price of Labour, and Reward of Ingenuity. The Necessities of the

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the One forc'd them to work, or sharpen'd their Invention, to make the Wealthy easy by their Service, or contribute to their Amusement and Diversion by cunning and artful Contrivances; and the Wealth of the other, in Exchange, purchas'd them the Conveniencies they stood in need of.

HENCE Mankind had various Methods of Life, according to their Situation and Circumstances; and as their Necessities increas'd in Proportion to their Numbers, so new Devices were still found out for Subsistence. For every one that is not posses'd of an Estate in Property, must betake himself for a Maintenance to some Art or Science, Trade or Merchandize, or laborious Employment. And such as have Nothing of their own to barter for what they want, and do not, or cannot supply this Want by any of those Means, must, as Matters now stand, be without the Comforts of Life, unless supported by the Goodness of God, or Charity of Men.

IN this OEcconomy the Divine Providence may seem unequal with respect to particular Families, or single Persons; but in regard to the whole Community, nothing could have been contrived with greater Wisdom, Goodness and Justice, than this Distribution of Mankind in various Circumstances. Nor is the Disproportion,

portion, if duly consider'd, so much as it appears to be. A Great, or Rich Man, however envied for his Abundance, enjoys nothing of that Abundance, except the beholding it with his Eyes, or the Childish Pleasure of calling it his own, more than another who has bare Necessaries. His Tenants, and their Families, live upon the Improvement of his Lands; Tradesmen and Artificers upon the spending of his Rents; and in this Expence his Servants and Retinue have much the larger Share: So that in the main he is but the Dispenser and Retailer of his Plenty to the Use and Subsistence of a great many others, an Instrument under GOD to encourage the Labour of the Countryman, and promote the Commerce of the Citizen; himself enjoying no more than Meat, Drink and Cloathing; except a few Vanities and Gaieties be taken in to the Account, which a wise Man would not be at the Trouble of obtaining and attending. And in this Dispensation the Poor are not to be thought neglected or forgotten, tho' they be possess'd of nothing to subsist themselves, or to give in Return for the Things they need, because they have by GOD's Appointment a Right to a Share of the Superfluities of others: The World was made for, and is sufficient to maintain all that dwell upon it; and that None may be destitute of some Proportion, GOD has given us inward Dispositions of Tenderness and

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and Humanity, as well as outward Affluence and Plenty. We cannot help being affected with Misery and Distress, and consequently are disposed to pity and relieve the Indigent and Unfortunate. To promote this natural Temper of Benevolence and Charity, GOD has added the Promise of Rewards temporal and eternal; and further, to secure our Performance of this Duty, has denounced the most severe Curses against the Unmerciful.

AGREEABLE to this Designation of the great Governour and wise OEconomist of the World, our Lawgivers have frequently made Provision for the Interests of the Poor, and subjected all who are able to contribute by a general Tax to their Maintenance. But there has formerly been this common Defect in all the Laws made for that Purpose; that tho' they secured a Support for the Poor, yet they were contrived rather to keep them so, and upon the Account of that Provision to encourage others to become so, than to better the Condition of those that were already Necessitous, and prevent others from falling into the like unhappy Circumstances. But of late the Wisdom of the Nation has been employ'd to contrive more suitable Means, not only of maintaining the Poor, but of obliging sturdy idle Vagrants to work for their own Subsistence, and educating the Children of the Indigent

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to Business, lessening hereby for the present the Number, and preventing for the future the Increase of Beggars, to the Ease and Relief of the richer Sort, to whom the former Laws were become a Grievance.

THIS Method had first been attempted by some particular Places, whose Poor were so numerous and burdensome, that of Necessity something was to be done, as well for their Support, as the Relief of those who contributed; some of whom must in Time have wanted what they were forc'd to give, or at least have suffer'd very much in their Business, had not some Method of Prevention been found out. And the Success of these particular Corporations, in their Provision for the Indigent, and saving to themselves in the Decrease of their Rates, has given Occasion to a General Law, whereby every Community is empower'd to follow the Steps of Those, who have led the Way with Success.

THE Increase and Charge of the Poor is, and has been for many Years, Matter of general Complaint, and we bear our Share in the common Burden: Give me Leave therefore to persuade you, (since by Law you are enabled, and in Prudence obliged) to take some Effectual Care for the better Maintenance of our present Poor, for the Employment of such as starve
for

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for Want of Business, and for the lessening of their Number for the Time to come ; and thereby to consult your own Ease and Interest in their Advantage. And this surely will not be thought an improper Subject for the Pulpit, which is intended, and may be managed, not only as a Kindness to our selves, but a beneficial Charity to the Souls and Bodies of the Necessitous.

THERE is much Food in the Tillage of the Poor; their Labour, if prudently employ'd, may tend to their great Benefit, and save considerably to the Publick. *But there is that is destroy'd for Want of Judgment;* either by not applying to Busines at all, which is the Case of many who rely entirely upon the Parish Allowance, and live wretchedly, rather than mend that Subsistence by their own Work ; or else by choosing a wrong Sort of Busines, such as they are not capable of, or the Profit does not answer their Labour. In this Case, if prudent Overseers have the Direction of their Work, it may be contrived so as to prove useful ; and the Produce of their Labours be dispos'd of to better Advantage, when managed by discreet Persons, and supported by a publick Stock, than it possibly can be by the Poor themselves, who cannot so well judge of, or wait a Market ; but must dispose of it to the first Bidder for Support, or want Support.

THE Words contains Two Propositions, *The Benefit of the Labour of the Poor*; and, *The Mischief of Idleness, or Ill-judg'd Business.*

AND in the further Consideration of them, I shall endeavour to prove,

First, The Benefit and Advantage that may be made of the Work of the Poor, to themselves, and to the Community.

Secondly, The Disadvantage and ill Consequence of Want of Judgment, either in downright Idleness, or (what is almost as bad) unprofitable Labour.

And then I shall apply the whole with Relation to the particular Circumstances of this Place.

First then, I am to prove, The Benefit and Advantage that may be made of the Work of the Poor, to themselves, and to the Community.

We cannot but be sensible, that a great Part of the Riches of the Nation, is owing to the Labour and Industry of the Inhabitants. The Land Rent and Produce of the Earth, might probably support the People in Life, could they be contented to live with the same Simplicity and Frugality, as the primitive Inhabitants of the old World; or even as the ancient Occupiers of this Island, before the *Roman Conquests* introduced with foreign Arts and polite Manners,

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ners, foreign Luxury, and studied Extravagance. But 'tis notorious, that at this Time the Expences far exceed the natural Product; and that we are able to subsist in so much Plenty, Pomp, and superfluous Enjoyments, must be ascribed to the additional Value that is given to the Materials of our Produce by the Labour of our Artificers; without which we could neither use those Materials our selves in the Service we want, nor adapt them to the Necessities and Occasions of Foreign Countries, and reap the Gain of a profitable Export and Commerce.

FOR Instance, the Materials of a Clock or Watch are of no Esteem in comparison to the Workmanship, the main part of the Price is for the Labour. The same is observable in the finest Works of our Wool, Minerals, and other Manufactures, where there is the least Stuff and most Labour, there is the highest Value. Paper, Glas, and Earthen Ware, are made up of Things in themselves worth nothing, and yet by the Skill and Diligence of the Workman raise a considerable Revenue, and keep and enrich many Families. So that it must be the great Interest of a People to encourage Labour, the Produce of which is so much clear Gain to the Publick, and it ought to be the especial Care of a Government, to countenance all such Trades as are thus carried

carried on, not only because of the neat Profit, but by Reason also of the Numbers therein employ'd. Things not manufactured pass thro' few Hands, and yield but little Gain; whereas Manufactures subsist Multitudes, and every several Employment brings Advantage to the several Workmen.

AND herein is the great Benefit to the Poor, that so many Families are maintain'd, and that a few Merchants are able to employ, and thereby subsist many Thousands, who without that Work would become Burdens to themselves and the Common-wealth. And the Advantage to the Publick consists in this, that they are eas'd of the Charge of keeping idle and useless People; that those very People in the spending of their Wages contribute to the Support of several others, with whom they have Occasion to traffick for Meat, Drink, and Cloathing: And those again by that Profit are enabled to trade with their Correspondents, and allow them a Gain in what they buy; and hereby a Circulation of Trade and Profit is promoted throughout the Kingdom. Which Advantage is further improved by the Merchant, who exports the Produce and Manufactures of our own Nation, and brings back again more Work for the Employment of the Poor, in such Commodities as are not manufactured; and more Busines for Tradesmen in such

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such as are. So that the Labour of the Poor is the main Wheel, the first Mover in the great Machine of Trade and Business. And it therefore is so, because as they are educated in a penurious and hardy Way of Life, their Wants lie in a little Compafs, their Expences are low, and therefore they can afford their Labour cheap, so as to leave sufficient Room for the Gain of those who employ them, and enable them to carry on either a Domestick or Foreign Trade; in the first of which, beside those who are immediately concern'd in some Part of the Busines, a great many Porters and Carriers are employed to the Subsistence of themselves and Families; and in the latter an infinite Number of Sailors, with the like Benefit to them and theirs: And consequently in both to the Publick.

HENCE appears the great Necessity and Usefulness of finding Employment for such as are able, and yet want Work, and are ready to perish for want of some Work. If they be not hired as Labourers they must be idle; and if they have no Stock of their own, they cannot employ themselves. And many such there are amongst us; and when we reflect, that they are supported entirely at our Expence, we must judge it prudent to find Employment for them, as well for our own Ease as their Subsistence. For in all Labour there is

is Profit, especially when those are made to eat the Labour of their own Hands, who were before maintain'd at the Charge of others; all the Advantage that is gain'd by their Work, is so much clear to those who kept them, and they must be very meanly employ'd if they yield no Profit.

SUPPOSING at first they cannot finish any Work fine enough for a Market, yet they may be so far instructed either in the Linen, or Woollen Manufacture, as immediately to cloath themselves, and by degrees learn to improve in saleable Ware. And their Work may be so distributed according to their Capacities when placed together in one House, as none but the Sick and very Impotent may want Employment. Some may serve as Nurses for the Children, others do the Busines of the House. Some may be hired out to such as want their Service, and others work at the Trades to which they were brought up. And the rest, as they are able, be kept to Busines of such Sort as may turn to some Account.

HENCE also appears the great Reasonableness of providing for, and maintaining the Poor, when after a Life of hard Labour and Service they are grown old and decrepit: They are not to be deem'd useless Members of the Common-wealth, who have in their

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Youth and Vigour contributed so largely to the general Good. Without the Assistance of the poorer Sort, the Merchant and Tradesman cannot raise an Estate, nor can he who is Master of one, live with Comfort and Pleasure, if they do not for him the meaner Offices and Drudgeries of Life: And therefore as the Providence of GOD has appointed such an Inequality for the Service of Mankind, and they who inherit the Labours of the People cannot well subsist without it; that Order of Men, who are doom'd to Want and Labour, tho' poor yet making many rich, are by no Means to be neglected; but the Old, Sick and Weak among them ought to be taken Care of by those who are able.

I proceed now,

Secondly, *To prove the Disadvantage and Ill Consequence of Want of Judgment, either in Down-right Idleness, or (what is almost as bad) Unprofitable Labour.*

'Tis a great Misfortune, that the Children of the Poor are often bred up to no Business at all, or too frequently are put out to such Employments, as are not agreeable to their Inclinations and Constitutions; or else are bound to such Trades as are overstockt, so as either to want Work, or be engaged in such Labour as is unprofitable. And this Misfortune is

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owing sometimes to the Negligence and Carelessness of Parents; sometimes is the Effect of Chance, when the Parents are willing to embrace the first Opportunity that offers of placing their Children, lest they should not afterwards meet with another, not distinguishing whether the Business be proper or no. The first is a scandalous and wicked Behaviour of Parents, for which they must answer to God, and account for the Miscarriage and Unhappiness of their Children. And as this Practice must of Necessity have an ill Effect upon the Community, it ought to be prevented, where there is a Power to do it; and such a Power is by Act of Parliament given to Parish Officers. As to the other, which is the Indiscretion of Parents, and occasion'd by the Meanness of their Circumstances, they are rather to be pitied for the Necessity, than altogether blamed for the Conduct. But however, as the Publick may and does suffer by this Method of Proceeding, a Remedy for this ought also to be applied, where there is an Opportunity of doing it; and if the Powers established by Authority be duly executed, this ill Effect might also be prevented.

AND the Necessity of applying some Remedy to these Misfortunes will be evident, if we consider the ill Effects of Idleness, whether it proceed from a vicious Education, or

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from the Dislike or Want of Business. We are naturally inclin'd to Evil, and from our original Corruption derive a Proneness to Iniquity; so that without some Employment, we are under a Necessity, as it were, of becoming what by Nature and Original Corruption we are disposed to be. If destitute of Busines, we immediately fall into Habits of Vice and Wickedness: An idle Person is an easy Conquest to the Temptations of Satan, and Sollicitations of ill Company; the weary Moments of an indolent Life are such a Burden to the slothful, that their only Endeavour is how to lose themselves, and pass away their tedious Hours without Observation and Reflection. Hence Gaming, Drunkenness, Excess, and Riot, and all the pernicious Diversions and ill Practices, that destroy the Fortunes, Souls and Bodies of the unwary Debauchees, and are the Pest of humane Society. For when those miserable Wretches have no Fund to answer all the Demands of an extravagant Luxury, they run into wicked Courses for a Supply of their Wants; and unable to dig, or ashamed to beg, they apply to readier Ways of getting, Pilfering and Stealing, Fraud and Violence; and either too idle or ignorant to subsist by their own Labours, live upon the Spoil of their Neighbours. And when in Process of Time they become habituated to do Evil,

they so far lose the Freedom of their Will, and the Judgment of their Understanding, as neither to choose for themselves, nor be advised by others to what is good, nor even to be forc'd to their own Interest. They are so entirely led Captive by the Devil at his Will, and seal'd unto Destruction, as not to be influenced by Religious Motives, without a Miracle of Divine Grace. And the Temporal Mischiefs and Inconveniences that necessarily follow such Behaviour in the Sufferings and Disgrace of the guilty Persons, and in the Ruin of their Families, gives them no manner of Pain or Uneasiness; because they are sensible, whenever they shall thro' old Age be incapable of subsisting any longer upon vile Practices, or by Intemperance have ruin'd their Constitutions, and thence become Objects of Charity, or if at their Deaths they shall leave a miserable and distress'd Family, in all these Cases the Law has made Provision for Support, the Parish is bound to maintain them. This gives them Encouragement, and however undeserving, they insolently dare to claim the Benefit of the Law.

THUS is Idleness the Foundation of most of those Vices, which ruin the Guilty, and thence become a Burden to the Innocent; when People, unable to maintain themselves
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by unprofitable Labour, choose rather to be idle, than labour in vain; or else slothful by Temper, and desirous to live by any Means rather than working, by an almost unavoidable Necessity, must either starve or subsist by Villany. And whereas most Men are more sensible of their present Temporal Wants, than provident against future Eternal Sufferings; therefore it happens that the Cravings and Needs of the Body prevail against the Interests of the Soul, and they will hazard any Thing, rather than not satisfie their sensual Appetites, and indulge importunate and clamorous Desires.

Now no Cure can be sufficient to remedy this great and common Evil, but what strikes at the Root, and takes away the first Cause. And 'twould be in vain to attempt it, without finding Busines for those People, contriving for such as are willing, Work that will turn to Account, and forcing the obstinately idle to labour, by the Execution of Legal Punishments, where nothing else will be effectual. And I am persuaded, that such as now live in Sloth and Idleness, when they have for a while been accustom'd to Busines, will not find in it the Toil and Difficulty they apprehend, but by Use will learn to take Delight and Pleasure in it. There is certainly less Trouble

Trouble than in strolling about from Place to Place; and the Attendance that is often given for a Piece of Bread, or a Cup of Drink, is more fatiguing, than the Labour that would have purchased more in the same Time, which argues great Want of Judgment in those poor Creatures, and shews the Inconveniencies that most part of them fall into, when left to their own Conduct. In like manner, when he that stole (the Effect of Want and Idleness) learns to steal no more, but labours working with his own Hands the Thing which is good, and gets not only sufficient for himself, but that he may have to give to him that needeth, (which probably would be the Case, if the Poor were bred to and constantly employed in Businels) he will find so much Difference in the Way of Life, as to bless GOD and his Benefactors, to praise and pursue his own Happiness in the Change of his Condition.

*And now having shewn the Advantage and Disadvantage of the Two Propositions in my Text,
I go on,*

Lastly, To Apply the Whole with Relation to the Particular Circumstances of This Place.

We are burden'd with a numerous Poor, and those we complain are every Day increas-

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ing upon us. But we should have a great deal more Reason for our Complaints, were it not that many of our Poor are taken off our Hands by private Charities. The Trustees of the Charity-School maintain, educate, and put out to Busines, several Children every Year; and notwithstanding the unreasonable Objections of some against this Sort of Charity, and the Conduct of it, sure I am 'tis a common Benefit. The Children are instructed for a competent time in the Principles of the Christian Religion, and the Duty they owe to the Civil Government; they are taught Reading, Writing, and Accounts, in such a Measure as may be useful in their low Station of Life, and then placed out to the Sea, Husbandry, or some mechanic Busines, for their future Maintenance. And 'tis evident, this Provision for them must be a Relief to the Publick, as it saves the present Expence of keeping those very Children, and prevents for the future their becoming chargeable. Mr. *Warton's* Hos-
pital maintains fix poor Women, and a great many Boys are Yearly put to Trades by his Benefaction; and by the Addition made by Sir *Michael Warton*, as many or near as many Men may be entirely supported. The Schools for Sewing, Knitting, Spinning, and Bone-Lace working, for which we are obliged to the Char-
ity and Piety of good and prudent Persons,

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shew us a Method how to educate our Youth of one Sex to Industry and profitable Labour, as our Charity-School does for the other Sex; and would we improve upon those Examples, we have a Specimen how the rest of our Poor may be maintain'd in a Religious, Honest and Frugal Manner, and be managed so as to contribute to their own Support. These Methods have lessen'd greatly the Number of Strollers, and would we make them general, our Streets would soon be clear'd of Beggars, to our own Ease and Credit, and their Comfort.

ALL Beginnings are difficult, both in the Expence, and finding out suitable Methods to make the Expence answer the true Intention; it requires Judgment and Knowledge in Business, to discern what Manufactures are proper for the Employment of the Poor, what Materials are most easily procured, and what Produce may be vended to the best Advantage in any particular Place. But as the *Society for promoting Christian Knowledge*, in their Zeal to forward every good Work that may be serviceable to Mankind, have collected and published some of the best Accounts of the Methods that have been taken in the Work-houses already erected in several Parts of the Kingdom, 'tis not to be doubted but some of those Accounts may so well suit the special Cir-

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Circumstances of this Town, as to serve for our Direction, when we shall in earnest apply our Thoughts and Endeavours to so good and beneficial a Work. Which surely we must be dispos'd to do, when we see so many Instances of the happy Effects of such Proceedings, which under the greatest Disadvantages have never fail'd of producing some good Effect.

But supposing our Attempts should not answer in the Article of Profit; which cannot be suspected, because several Families living in common together, were there nothing else in it, may be maintain'd at less Expence, than when divided in several Houses; yet they will be attended with so many other Conveniencies, as to make it well worth our while to buy, build, or hire publick Work-houses for the Entertainment and Employment of our Poor. Because under a publick Inspection, none can want the Necessities of Life, none can be idle; Children will not be neglected and abandon'd, as they are too often, by Parish Nurses; Prophaneness and Immorality, Vice and Wickedness, will be ashamed and discountenanced; and the constant daily Prayers, reading of the Scriptures and other good Books, to be enjoy'd as the common Usage of such Houses, will give those that live in them a better Sense of their Duty, and a truer Notion of

Diligence Reli-

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Religion, so as to make their Lives more regular and Christian, and their Attendance upon the Ordinances of the Church more frequent and more sincere, than when left to their own Management; and thus the Interests of Religion and the Civil Society, be at once consulted and provided for.

By an Act of the Ninth of His Majesty King *GEORGE*, the Church-wardens and Overseers of the Poor, with the Consent of the major Part of the Parishioners, in Vestry, or other publick Meeting, are impowered to purchase or hire a Work-house or Houses, to contract for Lodging, Maintaining, and Employing of the Poor; to take the Benefit of their Work for their common Use; and to strike out of the Poors List all such as shall refuse to be so lodg'd, maintain'd and employ'd. So that being thus authorized, there wants only an actual Exercise of this Power, to do what I have endeavoured to shew useful and advantageous to our selves, and the Indigent among us. And thus may we make a Benefit of the Poors Work, to their greater Comfort and better Support, and yet lessen our Parish Rates: Which may serve for the Application of the first Proposition of this Discourse.

As to the Second, the Disadvantage and ill Consequence of Idleness, whether voluntary or

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of Necessity; I must more especially address my self to You, the Magistrates, for the Cure and Remedy of this Evil, because That in a great Measure will depend upon the Exercise of your Authority, where the Methods already propos'd fail of Success.

ALL Crimes whatever are Offences against GOD, and as such liable to the Penalties of Divine Laws; but some have beside an immediate Relation to the Civil Society: And Justice requires, that where an Injury is done directly to the Civil State, there the Civil Magistrate should have an immediate Power of coercing and punishing such Iniquity, that the Publick may not suffer Damage. Now **Idleness** alone is a Detriment to the Community, and as such the *Dutch* have by Law provided Remedies against it, and Punishments for it. And hence it is, those States, who have little Land of their own, and consequently want Product to subsist themselves, or trade with others, yet by discouraging Laziness, and promoting Industry, maintain an infinite Number of People. Of so great Effect is Labour and Diligence under the proper Restraints, and suitable Encouragements of a Legislature.

HEREIN our Laws are defective in some Measure; for tho' our Poor have more and

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better Materials for their Employment and Subsistence, yet we labour under greater Inconveniences. But as I have observ'd, that *Idleness* naturally and necessarily ends in Wickedness, and that the Crimes, which are the Consequence of *Sloth*, are of such a kind as to injure the Publick, here is Occasion for the Magistrate, and here he has Power to exercise his Authority; and by severely animadverting upon the *ill Effects*, he may have an Influence upon the *Cause*. For all Punishments are intended to teach the Offender by his Sufferings to sin no more, and to warn others by the Example not to commit the same or like Crime, lest they also incur the Penalty. And therefore if the Laws against Immorality and Prophaneness have a due and regular Execution, Transgressors will not dare to be so impudent and open as they are, and have been, in the Practice of Iniquity. *Fear* would curb the publick Scandal, and consequently take off some part of the Practice, and probably by degrees the outward Restraint would abolish, however it certainly would lessen the secret Commission of Wickedness. The *Drunkard* therefore, the *Thief*, the *Common Swearer*, and other *Lewd Offenders*, ought to be made *Publick Examples*, that the Law may become, what it is design'd to be, a *Terror to Evil Doers*. And therefore every weak or corrupt Magistrate, who either thro' Indolence or

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base Views suffers the Wicked to go unpunish'd, not only betrays his Trust, but is answerable to God and the Community for the ill Consequences.

Next to the Persons of the Offenders, some Care ought to be taken of the Houses of Entertainment, where vile Practices are committed, and vile Persons ruin'd. Publick Houses, as they afford Reception for Travellers, and supply the weary Labourer with that Refreshment he cannot conveniently have at Home, are useful and tolerable; but when they degenerate into Tipling, Gaming and Bawdy-Houses, become common Nusances, and devour the Subsistence which many poor starving Families want at Home. The Gains of such Places are the Loss of the Publick, they get the Wages of the Labourer, and the Parish is forced to keep the Wife and Children, and the Man too when his Strength and Substance are gone. In granting therefore such Licences, the Magistrate ought to be very cautious in the Choice of modest and discreet Persons, and take Care afterwards that their Houses be regular and orderly; and especially not to suffer over many in the Busines, because if there be more than can live in an honest and reputable Way, they will for their own Advantage contrive Means to draw in the unwary and

and idle Person, and furnish the vicious with Opportunities of spending their Fortunes, to the common Detriment, as well as their particular undoing.

I have in this Discourse confined my self mostly to prudential Considerations, because the Subject naturally led me to it, and the religious Principles of Charity I have often insisted upon in other Discourses, and therefore thought it not necessary to repeat them in this. But give me Leave, in pursuance of the Method I have taken, to observe further, that the Promises of G O D to the charitable, extend to this World as well as the next; and that, in the Prosecution of this Charity I have recommended, there is a certain Prospect of Temporal Advantage, of saving to our selves, while we make a better Provision for the weak and aged of the Poor, while we employ the Idle to work for their own Maintenance, and manage the Education of the young and ignorant to useful and holy Purposes, so as to enable them to labour for their own Support, and at the same Time teach them to be wise unto Salvation.

But I would by no Means have it thought, that religious Principles ought not to have the greatest Weight with us in this Affair; for if

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if we proceed herein upon the Motives of Obedience to G O D's Commandments, and a firm Reliance upon his Promises, especially those of eternal Rewards, this will inspire us with Courage and Resolution superior to all Difficulties, and the Force of Religion, in Conjunction with the Arguments of worldly Wisdom, will give such a Spirit of Zeal and Unanimity, as must engage us to undertake this Work of Charity, and must give Success to our Undertaking.

Now to G O D, the Defender of the Poor, who is the Father of the Fatherless, and pleads the Cause of the Widow, be ascribed, as is due, all Honour, Glory, Praise, Majesty and Dominion, henceforth and for evermore. Amen.

F I N I S.



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